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President: Ms. Al Khalifa ..... (Bahrain)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 18

Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba

Report of the Secretary-General (A/61/132)

Draft resolution (A/61/L.10)

Amendment (A/61/L.19)

Mr. Maqungo (South Africa): On this important occasion, the Chairman of the Group of 77 and China, Ambassador Kumalo, would have preferred to deliver this statement himself. However, due to the fact that he is traveling, I, as Chargé, have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

The heads of State and Government of the Group of 77 and China at the Second South Summit, held in Qatar in June 2005, condemned the use of economic coercive measures designed to prevent countries from exercising their right to decide their own political, economic and social systems, and called on all countries not to recognize unilateral extraterritorial laws which impose sanctions on other States and foreign companies. The heads of State and Government also recognized that the embargo has caused a high degree of economic and financial damage that has negatively impacted on the welfare and well-being of the people of Cuba.

At the thirtieth annual ministerial meeting of the Group of 77 and China, the ministers once again firmly rejected the imposition of laws and regulations with extraterritorial impact and all other forms of coercive economic measures, including unilateral sanctions against developing countries, and reiterated the urgent need to eliminate them immediately. They emphasized that such actions not only undermine the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and international law, but also severely threaten the freedom of trade and investment. They therefore called on the international community neither to recognize those measures nor to apply them.

The Group of 77 and China is guided by the basic norms of international law and conduct in its principled support for the need to eliminate coercive economic measures as a means of political and economic coercion. The Group of 77 and China believes that constructive dialogue can foster mutual trust and understanding, as well as engender harmony and peaceful coexistence between nations.

The Group of 77 and China has therefore consistently opposed all aspects of the embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba. The Group of 77 and China views the continued imposition of an economic, commercial and financial embargo as a violation of the principles of the sovereign equality of States and of non-intervention and non-interference in each other's domestic affairs.

The Group of 77 and China is committed to working towards a better world for all in which

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nations, no matter how large or small, coexist peacefully. The achievement of such peaceful coexistence among nations requires adherence by all nations to the rule of law, including international law.

The action by the United States of America against the Republic of Cuba has lasted for 49 years, with 70 per cent of Cubans having been born under the embargo. Yet, that long-standing economic, commercial and financial embargo has been consistently rejected by a growing number of Member States to the point at which the opposition has become almost unanimous.

Thus, the need to respect international law in the conduct of international relations has been recognized by most members of this body, as has been evidenced by the growing support for the draft resolution that we are to adopt today. The States Members of the United Nations have been considering this item and support has grown steadily from 59 Member States opposing the United States embargo of Cuba in 1992 to 182 last year.

I believe that the presence of such a large number of Member States in this Hall today and their participation in these deliberations are indications of their opposition to unilateral extraterritorial measures. They express their firm opposition to unilateral measures as a means of exerting pressure on developing countries, as such measures are contrary to international law, international humanitarian law, the United Nations Charter and the norms and principles governing peaceful relations among States.

The Group of 77 and China, in accordance with international laws and norms, will again support the draft resolution before us today. We do so because that relentless and unilateral action has caused untold suffering to the people of Cuba. Considering the impact that this embargo has had on the every day lives of the Cuban people, it is therefore no surprise to see that the overwhelming majority of Member States are here today to join in the support for the Cuban people.

Mr. Severin (Saint Lucia): I am honoured to address this Assembly on behalf of the States members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

The Caribbean Community aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

The situation affecting Cuba is of significant importance to countries of the wider Caribbean and remains a source of continuing concern and disquiet. The United Nations Charter is very clear regarding such matters as respect for the sovereign equality of States, non-interference in the internal affairs of States, the self-determination of peoples, the peaceful settlement of disputes, and the maintenance of friendly relations between States. For States members of the Caribbean Community, those principles constitute core elements in the conduct of our international relations, and our adherence to them is paramount. We take note of the report of the Secretary-General in document A/61/132, which contains an impressive catalogue of replies from Member States and from United Nations bodies on the matter of the embargo against Cuba.

CARICOM member States have been consistent over the years in their opposition to the embargo, which has caused untold hardship to the people of Cuba. The introduction of new legislative and administrative arrangements in the last few years, with the expressed intent of strengthening the embargo, has only served to intensify that hardship. We continue to oppose this imposition of unilateral punitive measures, in particular the extraterritorial application of national legislation.

CARICOM States reaffirm the positions of the Group of 77 and China and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries in opposing such unilateral actions. We maintain the position that constructive engagement and peaceful negotiations remain the only acceptable means for advancing long-term peace and stability.

Cuba is the most populous State of the Caribbean region and an integral part of the Pan-Caribbean process. Caribbean ties with Cuba have historical significance, cemented by years of active cooperation at various levels. The member States of the Caribbean Community continue to maintain close relations with Cuba through a wide range of programmes of cooperation in areas including trade, health care, the global fight against HIV-AIDS, and human resources development.

The CARICOM-Cuba Joint Commission, established to foster mutual cooperation, remains committed to widening and deepening those collaborative efforts. CARICOM continues to engage Cuba in a constructive and mutually beneficial partnership that has yielded concrete benefits for the people of the Caribbean.

Cuba's assistance to CARICOM States and others, through the assignment of health-care personnel and the provision of medical care, continues to be an important sign of its commitment to regional cooperation. As a small State whose economy has been subjected to a crippling embargo over the past four decades, Cuba continues to impress the world with its boundless capacity for providing assistance in the areas of health care and education to other countries that are disadvantaged.

CARICOM States have been beneficiaries of that assistance. Within the past year, thousands of CARICOM nationals benefited from the Cuban eye care programme aptly called the Miracle Programme. Thousands more have continued to benefit from scholarships in tertiary and professional-level education.

Cuba is an integral part of the Caribbean region and threatens no one. It should not be isolated or excluded from participation in regional and hemispheric processes. That country's commitment to the social and economic development of the Caribbean continues to be well demonstrated.

CARICOM reiterates its unwavering support for the right of the Cuban people to self-determination in a manner beneficial to their social and economic development. The embargo imposed against Cuba is an anachronism and serves no useful purpose in the twenty-first century. It has served only to preserve a state of tension between two neighbouring countries and to generate concern, disquiet and discomfort throughout the Caribbean Basin.

The Caribbean Community enjoys friendly relations with the United States of America. In that spirit, we urge its Government to bring an end to the embargo and to engage in constructive dialogue with the intention of normalizing relations with Cuba. Such an initiative would remove a source of tension and conflict, and significantly enhance the prospects for peace, poverty alleviation, development and cooperation within the hemisphere of the Americas.

It is in that context that CARICOM States support the contents of the draft resolution presently before the General Assembly and will vote in support of its adoption. We will strongly resist any and all efforts being promoted to amend it.

Mr. Berruga (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Government of Mexico is taking the floor to reaffirm its rejection of the application of unilateral economic embargo measures. That opposition proceeds from the legal principle, recognized in this and other multilateral forums, that discourages the use of coercive measures without prior authorization in accordance with the provisions established in that regard by the Charter of the United Nations.

Mexico reaffirms that any kind of political, economic or military sanctions imposed against States can emanate only from decisions or recommendations formulated by the Security Council or the General Assembly. Likewise, our country regrets the serious humanitarian consequences of such sanctions — sanctions that are contrary to international law and must not stand in the way of diplomacy and dialogue, which are the ideal ways to resolve disputes between States.

The Government of Mexico has maintained that position in various agencies of the United Nations system on the basis of the fact that the United States embargo against Cuba is a unilateral policy hampering economic and social cooperation with that State. The report submitted by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly (A/61/132) on the implementation of resolution 60/12 cites many considerations arguing against the United States embargo and confirming the existence of an overwhelming consensus regarding the need to end that hostile practice.

The damage caused by the embargo is well known and well documented; we need only refer to the findings of various United Nations entities and organs. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean has noted that the embargo imposed against Cuba for more than four decades has had a negative impact on that country's economic, political and social life. UNICEF specifically cites the harmful effects of the United States embargo on Cuba's ability to acquire the cytostatic therapies so needed by children suffering from cancer.

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development stresses that the extraterritorial effects of the embargo imposed by Washington have significant consequences for Cuba because of the influence of United States interests in transnational corporations. According to the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the embargo imposed against Cuba limits

the country's access to low-cost water-treatment chemicals and equipment, which has a negative impact on the environment and jeopardizes public health.

For its part, the United Nations Development Programme emphasizes that the United Nations system has encountered difficulties and restraints in carrying out technical cooperation projects in Cuba because it is impossible to acquire equipment and other products manufactured in the United States or protected by that country's patents.

The Government of Mexico bases its bilateral and multilateral relations on the general principles of international law, which regulate peaceful and civilized coexistence among sovereign States. That is why those principles have remained fully valid over time with regard to the item before us. They have been consistently reiterated since 1992, when the Government of the Republic of Cuba submitted to the General Assembly for its consideration a draft resolution aimed at ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo. Since then, Mexico has voted in favour of the resolutions adopted by the Assembly in that regard. This embargo must end.

Likewise, the Government of Mexico has been emphatic in opposing unilateral laws that jeopardize the progress made towards greater cooperation, integration and free trade. Thus, through different mechanisms, it has conveyed to the international community its position against national laws with extraterritorial effects on third countries, in violation of international law.

Mexico emphatically rejects the amendment proposed by Australia last night, since it not only ignores the thrust of agenda item 18 but also appears to be a dangerous attempt to justify an economic embargo that clearly and flagrantly contravenes international law and the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

At this session of the General Assembly, Mexico, for the fifteenth time, reiterates its support for the draft resolution on the lifting of the United States embargo against Cuba. It is time for that resolution, which has received near-unanimous support from the Assembly, to be translated into reality.

The President: I should like to propose that the list of speakers in the debate on this item be closed.

I hear no objection.

It was so decided.

Mr. Le Luong Minh (Viet Nam): At the outset, I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report on the implementation of resolution 60/12, entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba" (A/61/132). My delegation warmly welcomes the presence of Mr. Felipe Pérez Roque, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cuba, at this plenary meeting of the General Assembly. In that connection, we align ourselves with the statement made by the representative of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

For over four decades, the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba has been severely hindering Cuba's economic and social development, causing numerous hardships and difficulties for the Cuban people. According to information provided by the Government of Cuba, direct economic damages caused by the embargo to the Cuban people exceed $86.1 billion. Last year alone, damages exceeded $4.108 billion. Those figures are indeed appalling.

Because of its adverse effects on the livelihood of the Cuban people and of its extraterritorial character, this embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba has since 1992 been repeatedly rejected by the international community through 14 identical resolutions, adopted every year by the Assembly by an absolute majority.

The General Assembly has over the past 14 years urged the United States to put an end to this embargo, reaffirming the sovereign equality of States, the principles of non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs and freedom of international trade and navigation, and expressing concern at the continued promulgation and application by Member States of laws and regulations, the effects of which affect the sovereignty of other States and the legitimate interests of persons under their jurisdiction.

However, despite the urging of the General Assembly and of many intergovernmental forums and bodies, the embargo has not only remained intact but has in fact been tightened through the enforcement of laws and provisions of a distinctly extraterritorial character. The embargo, which runs counter to the fundamental principles of international law, the United Nations Charter and the World Trade Organization

(WTO), has become the longest-ever in history. Its prolongation will only cause further tension in the context of the bilateral relations between the United States and Cuba and result in further hardships and difficulties for the Cuban people, especially those most vulnerable, such as women and children. This situation requires an urgent solution.

It remains the fundamental position of the Vietnamese Government that every State has the inalienable right to determine its own political system and path of development suitable to its own specific conditions. Viet Nam believes that the differences between the United States and Cuba can and should be settled through dialogue and negotiations, on the basis of mutual respect, respect for each other's independence and sovereignty, and non-interference in each other's internal affairs. We believe that the normalization and development of friendly relations between these two geographically close neighbours can only serve the interests of their peoples and those of regional and international peace and security.

We encourage steps in that direction, and, acting in the spirit of the 14 General Assembly resolutions mentioned earlier — most recently resolution 60/12, adopted last year — we join others in calling upon the United States of America to end its economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba.

Let me conclude by affirming that the Vietnamese people's sentiments of friendship and solidarity with the Cuban people will be further strengthened. The Vietnamese Government and people, together with other countries and peoples, will continue to do their utmost to assist the Government and the people of Cuba in overcoming the effects of the embargo.

Mr. Liu Zhenmin (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation associates itself with the statement made by South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Each year for 15 consecutive years, the General Assembly has adopted a resolution urging all countries, in compliance with the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law, to repeal or invalidate all laws and measures with extraterritorial effects that compromise the sovereignty of other States, undermine the legitimate rights and interests of entities and persons under the jurisdiction of those States and affect their freedom of trade and navigation. Regrettably, today, the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba is still in place.

In this age of globalization, exchanges and cooperation among countries, on an equal footing, represent the trend of our time. Normal economic, commercial and financial ties among countries are in the interest of all countries and are by no means a favour bestowed by any one country on others. Dialogue on an equal footing is the best way to resolve differences.

For more than 40 years, an embargo and sanctions have been imposed against Cuba under the pretext of promoting democracy, freedom and human rights in Cuba. But what is the reality? First, the practice of attempting to force another country to give up its independently chosen path of development, even to overthrow its Government, through an embargo and sanctions constitutes a violation of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and of the basic norms governing contemporary international relations. Such practices have nothing to do with promoting democracy and freedom.

Secondly, the embargo and sanctions imposed on Cuba are extraterritorial in nature and are therefore in violation of international law and the principles, objectives and rules of international trade. They also run counter to the principle of trade liberalization.

Thirdly, the embargo and sanctions against Cuba have seriously obstructed and constrained the efforts of the Cuban people to eradicate poverty, improve their living standards and achieve economic and social development. The embargo and sanctions pose a grave threat to the enjoyment by the Cuban people of the rights to life and to development.

The facts show that some 40 years of embargo and sanctions against Cuba have not only harmed the interests of that country and others, thus seriously hampering development efforts at the international level, but also contradict the principles of democracy, freedom, the rule of law and human rights, thus completely defeating the policy goals claimed by the country concerned. While harming others, they do not benefit the imposer itself either.

The Chinese Government always adheres to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, advocates the sovereign equality of States and non-interference in each other's internal affairs, and

endeavours to promote democracy and the rule of law in international relations. We believe that countries should, in the light of their specific national conditions, choose their own political, economic, and social systems and mode of development. We are of the view that differences and disputes between States should be solved through dialogue and cooperation on the basis of equality and mutual respect.

In view of all that, the Chinese Government resolutely opposes the economic, commercial and financial embargo and sanctions imposed on Cuba. It is our hope that the country concerned will take concrete actions, engage in dialogue instead of confrontation, carry out contacts and exchanges instead of embargo and sanctions, and implement the relevant United Nations resolutions without delay. China therefore supports the draft resolution submitted by Cuba under the current agenda item.

Mr. Godard (United States of America): The United States trade embargo is a bilateral issue and as such should not come before the General Assembly. We maintain the embargo to demonstrate our continuing call for economic and political freedom for all Cubans. We maintain the embargo so that the benefits of United States food and medical sales go to the Cuban people, not to privileged leaders.

Cuba has introduced the draft resolution claiming that the embargo adversely affects the Cuban people, cynically asking everyone to ignore the truth that the Cuban Government's policy of systematically denying the human, economic, labour and political rights of its people over 47 years is the real source of the adverse affects on the Cuban people. Yet the Cuban Government asks that members vote to blame the United States for its failures.

The draft resolution inaccurately blames the United States trade embargo for the hardships of the Cuban people, while exonerating the Cuban Government's own policies, which deny the right of the Cuban people to a fair wage, to own and operate a business, to buy and sell property, to freely associate and to freely express their opinions. The United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean has concluded that Cuba must promote small business opportunities to bring life to the Cuban economy, but the Cuban Government has refused to accept the need for the kind of free market reforms that would bring opportunities to the Cuban people.

Today's draft resolution also inaccurately claims that the United States embargo is a violation of freedom of navigation. In fact, the United States embargo does not prevent the rest of the world from trading with Cuba or providing Cuba with access to food or medicine. In fact, since 1992, the United States has licensed over $1.5 billion in the sale and donation of medicine and medical equipment for the Cuban people, and over $8 billion worth of agricultural commodities in the past years. In November 2005, the head of Cuba's food importing agency confirmed that the United States was Cuba's biggest food supplier.

If the Cuban Government wants the United States to end the embargo, it knows what is needed: reforms that will benefit the Cuban people, such as free and fair elections, an open economy, independent trade unions and a free press, to name a few. In 2002, President Bush made clear that his response to such concrete reforms would be an effort with the United States Congress to ease restrictions on trade and travel between the United States and Cuba. However, four years have passed and the Cuban Government has answered the challenge for freedom only with imprisonment for human rights leaders and trade unionists.

The draft resolution blames the United States embargo for the adverse impact on the Cuban people, but does not refer to the Cuban Government's own embargo against its people — an embargo that even prevents United Nations and international human rights investigators from traveling to Cuba and meeting freely with the Cuban people. The draft resolution does not condemn that embargo.

The United States supports the right of the Cuban people to determine their own future freely through a genuine transition to political and economic liberty. We recall the words of José Martí, "El Apostol", as he is known, who said that "only oppression should fear the full exercise of freedom".

We will vote against the draft resolution and we encourage all delegations that support the rights of and a transition to freedom for the Cuban people to do the same. We should send a clear message to the Cuban Government that it is not the embargo, but rather its own denial of the basic human rights of its people, that is the cause of their suffering.

Mr. Atiyanto (Indonesia): Time and again, we have had to address the issue of ending the economic,

commercial and financial embargo imposed on Cuba. In reflecting on this matter, Indonesia associates itself with the views expressed by the representative of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Let me thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report as contained in document A/61/132. The report presents opinions of Member States, expressing unanimously, their disagreement and opposition to the application of the unilateral and extraterritorial economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba.

Indonesia's long-standing position on this issue is well known. It is based on the principle that the application of unilateral and extraterritorial economic and trade measures runs counter to the Charter of the United Nations and contravenes international law. The principles of non-intervention in countries' internal affairs and the freedom of international trade and navigation must also be respected and upheld.

The application of an economic and trade embargo has produced negative effects in the economic and social lives of innocent people, especially women and children. These measures also constitute a major impediment to the full enjoyment of the right to development by a sovereign State and its people. They violate human rights, considering the right to development is a basic human right, and they also undermine civil and political rights, as well as economic, social and cultural rights.

This situation is not in line with the spirit of the global partnership for development as set out in the Millennium Declaration, the Monterrey Consensus and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. In fact, at the 2005 World Summit, our leaders strongly reiterated their determination to ensure the timely and full realization of the development goals and objectives, including the Millennium Development Goals to eradicate poverty. Indonesia's position is in keeping with those expressions of global solidarity.

Based on those principles, Indonesia will vote in favour of draft resolution A/61/L.10 on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America on Cuba. In this regard, we want, once again, to emphasize the fact that the continuation of the economic, commercial and financial embargo on Cuba will only serve to maintain high tensions between the two neighbouring countries. This certainly will not bring us very far in our commitment to and respect for the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law. Both of these are indispensable foundations for a more peaceful, prosperous and just world. In such situations, democracy has limited space within which to develop.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Felipe Pérez Roque, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cuba, to introduce draft resolution A/61/L.10.

Mr. Pérez Roque (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): This is the fifteenth consecutive occasion that Cuba is submitting to the General Assembly the draft resolution, entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba". We do so in defence of the rights of the Cuban people, but also in defence of the rights of the American people and the rights of the peoples represented in this Assembly.

The economic war unleashed by the United States against Cuba, the longest and most ruthless ever known, qualifies as an act of genocide and constitutes a flagrant violation of international law and the Charter of the United Nations. Throughout the past 48 years, the United States blockade has caused economic damage to Cuba of over $86 billion. Seven in every ten Cubans have, from the time of their birth, lived, suffered from and endured the effects of the blockade, which attempts to defeat us through hunger and disease.

The blockade prevents Cuba from trading with and receiving tourism from the United States. It prevents Cuba from using the United States dollar in its external transactions and from receiving credits or engaging in operations with United States banks or their subsidiaries in other countries. The blockade does not allow the World Bank or the Inter-American Development Bank to give even a modest loan to Cuba.

But more serious than all that is that the Untied States blockade imposes its criminal provisions on Cuba's relations with other countries that make up this General Assembly.

We have seen how the representatives of the United States Government have again repeated the same fallacious arguments — the same lies as in previous years. It is a lie when they say that this is a

bilateral matter, when they say that Cuba can trade and purchase in other countries what it cannot buy in the United States, when they say that the United States does not pursue the vessels of other countries that attempt to come to Cuba and when they say that Cuba uses the embargo as a pretext. I repeat to the delegate of the United States what has been said in past years: if the United States Government is of the view that Cuba uses this as a pretext, then why do they not remove this pretext by lifting the embargo? Why do they not remove the embargo against Cuba if the United States' opinion is that Cuba is using it as a pretext to justify its failure?

The blockade prevents Cuba from trading with companies based in Member States, not just United States enterprises, but enterprises of Member States that are subsidiaries of United States corporations. Vessels with flags from Members countries cannot call at United States ports if they have previously carried goods from or to Cuba. That is the Torricelli Act, signed by President Bush, senior, in 1992.

The United States blockade also prevents companies from the rest of the world — those of your countries, fellow members — from exporting to the United States products containing Cuban raw materials, and it prevents those companies from exporting to Cuba products or equipment containing more than 10 per cent American components. That is the truth of the matter. The blockade pursues the businesses of other countries, not just those of the United States. Others — your compatriots, fellow members — who seek to make investments in Cuba, along with their families, are threatened with refusal of entry into the United States and they can even be brought to trial in United States courts. That is the Helms-Burton Act of 1996.

I am not going to give endless examples that prove what I have said. The Secretary-General has issued an extensive report (A/61/132), with the feedback of 96 countries and 20 international agencies and organizations, which unequivocally reveals the hardships and shortages that the blockade imposes on the lives and development of the Cuban people.

We consider it important to inform the General Assembly about the plan for the reconquest of Cuba approved by President Bush in May 2004 and updated in July 2006. In it, we can clearly see what the United States Government would do in our country if it ever had it under its control. According to the President of the United States, what is most important is to return all of the properties in Cuba to their former owners. That would include, for example, taking the land away from the hundreds of thousands of farmers in Cuba who now own their own land, either individually or in cooperatives, in order to reinstate the system of big landowners. That would also mean evicting millions of Cuban landowners from their homes in order to return their properties or plots of land to their former claimants.

President Bush describes this as an accelerated process that would be under the complete control of the United States Government — which, for those purposes, would set up a so-called commission for the restitution of property rights.

Another structure would also be established — a United States Government standing committee for the economic reconstruction of Cuba, which would run the process of implementing in Cuba an extremely harsh neoliberal adjustment programme that would include the unbridled privatization of education and health services and the elimination of social security and welfare. Retirement benefits and pensions would be removed and retirees would be offered the chance to do construction work as part of a so-called corps of Cuban retirees.

President Bush recognizes in the plan that it will not be easy to apply the plan in Cuba. Therefore, he instructs the State Department to create a repressive apparatus as an immediate priority, which we imagine will be trained in the brutal techniques of asphyxiation that Vice-President Cheney does not consider to be torture, in order to stifle the unrelenting resistance of the Cuban people. It is even recognized that there will be a long list of Cubans to be persecuted, tortured and massacred.

The plan even contemplates a central child adoption centre to hand over to families in the United States and in other countries the children of those parents who lay down their lives fighting or become victims of repression. That entire cynical and brutal programme to recolonize a country after destroying and invading it, would be run by a character who has already been appointed and whose ridiculous post, reminiscent of that of Paul Bremer, is entitled Cuba Transition Coordinator: a man named Caleb McCarry, whose only record of note is his close friendship with the terrorist groups of Cuban origin that are still

masterminding and executing from Miami, with complete impunity, new assassination plots and acts of sabotage against Cuba.

Those are the same groups that are asking President Bush to release the terrorist Luis Posada Carriles, the brains behind the explosion of a Cuban passenger aeroplane, while five courageous Cuban anti-terrorist fighters have been subjected to a cruel and prolonged imprisonment in the United States since 1998.

Two years after its enactment, most of the plan has already been implemented. Thus, new and greater restrictions were imposed on family visits to Cuba by Cubans resident in the United States. Americans who travelled to Cuba were viciously persecuted. In the course of the last two years, more than 800 people accused of travelling to our country have been fined. Additional constraints were imposed on the sending of remittances to Cuba. Academic, cultural, scientific and sporting exchanges have been virtually eliminated. Since 2004, 85 companies have been penalized for allegedly violating the blockade against Cuba.

The fierce persecution against our country's financial transactions and trade has been further intensified. There are also tangible results from the demented worldwide tracking conducted by the so-called Group for the Identification of Cuban Assets on everything that appears to be a payment from or to Cuba.

Along with the strengthening of the blockade, in May 2004 President Bush approved another $59 million to pay his scarce and disheartened mercenaries in Cuba with a view to fabricating a non-existent internal opposition and to pay for propaganda campaigns and illegal radio and television broadcasts against Cuba. But it was all in vain. President Bush realized that time was running out and he could not keep his promise to the extremist Cuban groups in Florida. His domestic and foreign woes were growing and continue to grow, and socialist Cuba was and still remains upright and unrelenting. Then, on 10 July 2006, President Bush added new measures to his plan.

A significant aspect of the new 93-page concoction is that it contains a secret annex, with actions against Cuba that have not been made public and which, as they explain, would not be revealed in order to achieve their effective realization and for national security reasons.

Will these include new assassination plots against Cuban leaders, more terrorist acts or a military aggression? From this rostrum, today, before the General Assembly, we challenge President George W. Bush to publicly disclose the content of that document, which he has not to date had the courage to reveal. The plan, of course, includes the allocation of additional money. This time around, it is $80 million over two years and no less than $20 million per year until the Cuban revolution is defeated — in other words, forever. There is also an increase in the radio and television broadcasts against Cuba, overtly violating International Telecommunication Union standards.

In addition, renewed efforts are being made to create a so-called coalition of countries to support so-called regime change in Cuba. The Bush plan is particularly emphatic on the extraterritorial application of the economic war against Cuba. Thus, new mechanisms are being established to improve the machinery that enforces the blockade regulations and new sanctions are being adopted.

One that stands out for its novelty is the criminal prosecution of violators. Title III of the Helms-Burton Act authorizes the filing of lawsuits in United States courts against foreign investors in Cuba, particularly those from countries supporting the continuance of the Cuban revolution.

More stringent enforcement of title IV is also envisaged. This would deny entry into the United States of investors in Cuba and their families; the persecution is aimed in particular at those investing in oil prospecting and extraction, tourism, nickel, rum and tobacco. As a tool to track down sales of Cuban nickel to other markets — not just to the United States market, but to businesses in other countries represented here as well — a so-called inter-agency Cuban nickel task force was created.

The siege is being tightened on exchanges between American and Cuban churches, and there is a ban on humanitarian donations to Cuban religious organizations.

But one new blockade measure approved by President Bush deserves particular comment. The document states that the United States will deny all exports of medical equipment that can be used in health-care programmes for foreign patients. That is, the United States Government, which has always gone out of its way to cause the failure of Cuba's

international medical cooperation programmes, now admits that its persecution may even reach the point of trying to block Cuba's purchase of necessary equipment from other parts of the world.

I must emphasize again that the embargo has reached the point of prohibiting exchanges between United States churches and Cuban churches. Churches in the United States are being forbidden from sending donations, medicines or other supplies for humanitarian use to their counterpart churches in Cuba. President Bush's blockade against Cuba has thus even declared war on United States and Cuban churches, trying to thwart the will of God. Secondly, it seeks to prevent Cuba from buying medical equipment for international medical cooperation programmes.

Some background information is essential here. Since 1962, the year in which Cuban doctors rendered assistance abroad for the first time, in Algeria, nearly 132,000 Cuban doctors, nurses and health technicians have provided services in 102 countries. At present, 31,000 Cuban health workers are rendering services in 69 countries; of those, 20,000 are physicians. Yes, 31,000 health workers are providing care in 69 countries; in many of the countries represented here.

A medical brigade specializing in catastrophes and emergency situations was established on 19 September 2005, in the midst of the scourge visited upon 2 million poor people and black people in the southern United States by the combined force of Hurricane Katrina and of the Government's irresponsibility and insensitivity. The brigade is composed of 10,000 members who are appropriately trained and equipped, and it bears the name of a young American, Henry Reeve, who gloriously laid down his life in 1873 in the Cuban countryside as a general in our liberation army. At the founding of the brigade, more than 1,500 Cuban doctors were ready to leave for the most ravaged areas and save who knows how many lives — lives which were lost after President Bush's refusal to receive them.

A total of 2,564 members of this brigade worked for eight months in Pakistan in the wake of the earthquake there. They set up 32 field hospitals that were later on donated to that brother nation. They cared for 1.8 million patients and saved 2,086 lives. Subsequently, a further 135 Cuban healers rendered assistance in Indonesia and set up two field hospitals, which were also donated. They treated 91,000 patients and performed 1,900 surgeries. Cuban doctors had previously worked in disaster areas, such as Peru in 1970, Venezuela in 1999, Sri Lanka and Indonesia in 2004 and Guatemala in 2005, to give but a few examples.

If President Bush were to succeed in his cynical plan, Cuba would be prevented from offering its modest and generous effort to other peoples, many of whom are represented here, in a field where nobody questions our development and experience.

Since 2004, Cuba has been implementing Operation Miracle, through which nearly 400,000 patients from 28 countries, not including some 100,000 Cubans, have been operated on, free of charge, and have recovered their eyesight. Our country alone could not defray all of the relevant expenses, but Cuban doctors, technicians, technology and equipment have laid the groundwork to operate on 1 million Latin American and Caribbean people every year.

If the American offensive were to succeed in curtailing this endeavour, an equivalent number of people suffering from more than 20 eye diseases would lose their eyesight. The United States Government knows this, but it does not give up on its gruesome plan to stifle Cuba. And here I am speaking only of those treated for their eyesight, and not the hundreds of millions of people benefiting from the comprehensive health-care programmes conducted by the Cuban internationalist doctors.

Cuba is not only providing medical services. It is currently providing training to more than 46,000 young medical students from 82 nations of the third world, either in Cuba or in their own countries.

Cuba will not surrender. Nor will it falter in advancing these humane endeavours, which signify that a world of peace, justice and cooperation is possible. Cuba's commitment to the rights of all the world's dispossessed is stronger than the hatred of the executioners.

Millions of Cubans are now awaiting the decision that this Assembly will take. We ask you, delegates of Member States, today to support respect for Cuba's rights, which is also respect for the rights of the peoples that you represent.

We ask you to vote in favour of the draft resolution entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the

United States of America against Cuba". We do so with our heads held high, with optimism and confidence, and with the hope of repeating the verses sung by a poet of our generation, Silvio Rodriguez, because in Cuba

> "Nobody is going to die,
> "Our whole life is our good-luck talisman,
> "It is our cloak.
> "Nobody is going to die,
> "Certainly not now when the anthem of the Homeland is our song." [excerpt from *Preludio de Girón*]

And if they impose a war on us, there will not be enough soldiers in the United States to cover the casualties that they would endure in a country that has resisted and has been preparing its defence for over 45 years.

This is the statement I had prepared in submitting our draft resolution. However, an unprecedented incident in this Assembly compels me to add a few remarks. For the first time since 1992, when the Assembly began considering the issue of the blockade against Cuba, the United States Government is trying to sabotage this vote through an amendment. After several weeks of exerting brutal pressure, the United States realized that it could not reverse the overwhelming support generated by this draft resolution. It then attempted to talk a large number of delegations into abstaining, and it failed. Then, it threatened and blackmailed others to reject it, and it failed again. It finally decided to boycott this vote in order to divert attention from the main issue, which is its embargo against Cuba, which is a flagrant violation of international law, and it decided that the Australian delegation would submit the draft amendment prepared in Washington.

I have here the talking points distributed by the United States on Monday, 6 November, seeking support for an amendment that Australia only presented as its own yesterday, Tuesday, 7 November, in the afternoon. It is curious that the delegation of the United States requests support in this paper for an amendment that Australia had not even decided as yet to submit. The United States tried to get one of the European Union countries to present it, but it did not succeed. It sought support in other countries, but it could not muster support there either. Finally, a very high-level call from Washington to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Australia determined that Australia would serve as the lackey to submit the United States amendment.

Is this amendment an expression of genuine concern by Australia? No, it is not. It is merely indicative of its abject submission to the United States Government. Besides, Australia does not have the moral authority to refer to the human rights situation in Cuba. The Australian Government is an accomplice to United States imperialism. It is some sort of "pocket imperialism", always ready in the Pacific to follow its Washington mentors. Thus, not only did it cooperate with and send troops, along with the United States Army, to the war in Viet Nam, in which 4 million Vietnamese lost their lives, but it also participated enthusiastically with over 2,000 soldiers in the invasion of Iraq, an absolutely illegal preventive war. Still today, some 1,300 Australian soldiers remain in Iraq on the ground, even though a mere 22 per cent of the Australian population supports this venture.

The Australian Government, which subjects the country's aboriginal population to a real apartheid regime, does not have the moral authority to criticize Cuba. The Australian Government, which supports the torture centre of the United States in Guantánamo and which supported the summary trials in military tribunals against the prisoners that were harassed and tortured there, including Australian prisoners, does not have the moral authority to criticize Cuba. Much less so does the United States. We all saw the appalling images from the Abu Ghraib prison and the heinous images from Guantánamo. We know that they have organized and still maintain clandestine prisons and secret flights on which they have carried drugged and handcuffed prisoners. We saw the horrendous images of hurricane Katrina, when human beings were doomed to die because they were black, because they were poor. After everything we now know, this Assembly cannot be deceived or manipulated.

Therefore, on behalf of Cuba, we ask you, ladies and gentlemen, to vote first in favour of the no action motion that we will present in order to oppose the amendment proposed by Australia and, later, to vote in favour of draft resolution A/61/L.10 submitted by Cuba.

The United States representative has raised in his speech before this Assembly the sacred name of José Martí, the apostle of Cuban independence, and, in

doing so, he stained this glorious name of a man who said that the war waged in Cuba for independence was to prevent the imposition of United States control over the islands of the Caribbean. Our delegation takes offence at the use of the name of José Martí to justify the embargo. I would remind the General Assembly, and in particular the delegation of the United States, that José Martí also said that trenches of ideas are more valuable than trenches made of stone. It is trenches of ideas that have made the noble, generous and heroic people I represent here invincible.

Mr. Ja'afari (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like at the outset to associate my country, the Syrian Arab Republic, with the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

The purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter underscore the right of States to exercise sovereignty over their own territory and the rule of non-interference in the internal affairs of other States. All United Nations Member States, especially the major Powers that contributed to the drafting of the Charter and who themselves suffered the bitterness of Nazi and fascist interference in their affairs and encroachment on their sovereignty during the Second World War, are expected to respect the Charter more than other States, because the Charter is the constitution of this Organization and its ultimate frame of reference.

The unilateral embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba and the new measures aimed at tightening this embargo are in contradiction with the Charter and the principles of international law, in particular the principles of equal sovereignty among States, non-interference in their internal affairs and free international trade and navigation. Thus, the embargo inevitably becomes illegal and contradicts the criteria agreed on by the international community regarding relations among States.

The embargo imposed against Cuba some 48 years ago set a precedent for unilateral behaviour by Member States outside the framework of international law. The embargo has subjected Cuba to economic, political and social losses of every kind; it has entrenched the suffering of the Cuban people, especially children and the elderly; and it has had an impact on the Cuban people's intensive efforts to achieve well-being and prosperity. The embargo continues to harm the Cuban economy, which has directly lost some $86 billion, in addition to tens of billions of dollars in indirect losses. Moreover, the embargo continues to harm the social and cultural development of the Cuban people. It has also deprived the Cuban people of the opportunities and benefits of trade. The embargo directly violates the basic freedoms and human rights of the Cuban people, including the right to live in dignity and the right to development.

My delegation commends Cuba's continued efforts to conduct a constructive dialogue with the United States of America in order to settle all issues under dispute between the two countries on the basis of equal sovereignty, mutual respect, non-interference in the internal affairs of States, and respect for the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter and for the principle of good-neighbourliness. My delegation believes that normalization of relations between the United States and Cuba would be in the interest of the peoples of the two countries.

Syria underscores the right of peoples freely to select their own political, economic, social and cultural systems, in accordance with international law. The support of 182 States for resolution 60/12 at the previous session is a clear indication of the determination of the overwhelming majority of the international community to end the unjust embargo imposed against Cuba and to emphasize the need to respect the national political, economic and social systems that every country selects of its own free will in accordance with its own national interests.

In that regard, we would like to recall the Final Document of the recent Conference of heads of State or Government of the Non-Aligned Movement, held in Havana. Heads of State or Government again called upon the United States of America to put an end to the unilateral economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba. It also expressed the concern of the countries of the Non-Aligned Movement over the widening of the embargo against Cuba and the continuous new legislative measures aimed at intensifying the embargo.

We would also like to recall the Doha Declaration, adopted by the developing countries at the Group of 77 and China's Second South Summit, held in Qatar in 2005, in which the Summit categorically rejected laws and regulations with extraterritorial impact and all other forms of coercive economic

measures. The Summit expressed grave concern over the negative impact of economic sanctions on the development capacity of targeted countries. It made a special appeal in the name of all the leaders of the developing countries for the immediate lifting of the embargo against Cuba.

The international community has repeatedly expressed its rejection of the unilateral sanctions against Cuba and their extension by the so-called Helms-Burton Act adopted by the United States. That act extends the jurisdiction of United States national legislation and encroaches on the sovereignty of other States that deal with Cuba. This is incompatible with the principle of the sovereign equality of States and with international law. Syria also condemns the recent expansion of aggressive United States policies against Cuba, including through the threat of use of military force, in clear violation of the Charter of the United Nations.

Despite all the previous appeals by the General Assembly over the past 15 years, the United States Government has not yet taken any steps to respond to the will of the international community. Moreover, the United States intentionally and stubbornly continues its incorrect disregard for the legitimate requests of the international community.

Furthermore, the United States has imposed new measures to tighten the embargo on independent, sovereign Cuba. The behaviour of the United States of America and the measures it takes pose a clear threat to the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Cuba; this directly threatens stability in the region and constitutes a blatant threat to international peace and security.

The Security Council and the General Assembly, in accordance with their mandates, are called upon to take all necessary measures to put an end to the embargo, the economic sanctions and the hostile policies and measures of the United States both against its neighbouring countries and against other Member States geographically distant from the United States. In that regard, my delegation hopes that all elements of the embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba will be lifted and that the international community's voice, as expressed by the General Assembly and other bodies, will be heeded and complied with by the United States. My country, Syria, will therefore vote in favour of the draft resolution.

Mr. Raghavan (India): We associate ourselves with the statement made by South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. The embargo and sanctions imposed by the United States against Cuba have been in place for over four decades and have been a subject of discussion in the General Assembly for 15 successive sessions.

The embargo has had an impact on Cuban efforts to eradicate poverty, improve livelihoods and promote socio-economic development. It has also hindered the full enjoyment of human rights, such as the right to development, and the right to food, medical care and social services which, despite these constraints, are of a high order.

The American Association for World Health concluded that with regard to its impact on the Cuban health system, the embargo caused a significant rise in suffering, with patients going without essential drugs, or doctors performing medical procedures without adequate equipment. The embargo also continued to have an impact on food aid deliveries. The negative impact of the embargo in the educational sector is linked to trade restrictions that prevent the purchase of needed imports at more competitive prices.

The embargo and sanctions have limited Cuba's access to markets, capital, technology and investment and are not in conformity with multilateral trading regimes and cannot be justified even under the "essential security interests" exception clause of the World Trade Organization's General Agreement on Trade in Services.

Under normal conditions, Cuba and the United States would be natural economic partners, benefiting mutually from trade. It is our understanding that a considerable part of United States businesses would like to take advantage of the Cuban market. Imports of United States food and agricultural products, which account for 13 per cent of total Cuban imports of food and agricultural products, reflects the impact of the United States legislation enacted in 2000 that eased food and medical sanctions against Cuba. According to some estimates, the potential loss to United States business ranges between $1 billion to $15 billion.

The General Assembly has rejected laws and regulations with extraterritorial impact and all other forms of economic coercion. The Assembly has adopted resolutions urging all countries to comply with the Charter and principles enshrined in legal

instruments and to repeal or invalidate all laws and measures that carry extraterritorial effects, bearing on the sovereignty of other States, the legitimate rights and interest of peoples or entities under their jurisdiction, and the freedom of trade and navigation. Sanctions, irrespective of their purpose, have to comply with the international legal principles of non-intervention and proportionality.

We share the view expressed by the countries which have reiterated their opposition to the extraterritorial aspect of the economic embargo that was implemented in accordance with the 1992 Cuban Democracy Act (the so-called "Torricelli Law"), and the 1996 Helms-Burton Act, through which the extraterritorial reach of the embargo encompasses foreign companies as well as foreign subsidiaries of United States companies doing business with Cuba.

Mr. Wenaweser (Liechtenstein), Vice-President, took the Chair.

India, one of the largest democracies in the world, has consistently opposed any unilateral measures by countries which impinge on the sovereignty of another country, including any attempt to extend the application of a country's laws extraterritorially to other sovereign nations. India believes that efforts to consolidate endeavours in creating and strengthening an economic environment capable of providing equal opportunities to all countries are required and that the international community needs to redouble its efforts to have an environment free from sanctions and embargoes.

Mr. Gharibi (Islamic Republic of Iran): At the outset, my delegation would like to fully associate itself with the statement made by the representative of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

There is no doubt that the blockade is in violation of the internationally agreed principles governing relations among States, such as the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention in their internal affairs, and freedom of international trade and navigation. As my delegation has reiterated in previous statements, unilateral coercive economic policies and measures should be regarded as major impediments to the international community in pursuing its common causes and interests. Such measures run counter to the promotion of cooperation and partnerships which is required for the creation of a favourable environment for the benefit of all at the international level.

The reports of the Cuban Government on the impact of the embargo clearly indicate that such unilateral measures have been conducive to further disparities in the areas of health, economy, education and training, trade, tourism, civil aviation, and even cultural activities. The adoption of 14 consecutive resolutions up to 2005 by the United Nations General Assembly is the reaction of the international community to such measures.

These resolutions call upon all States to refrain from applying laws and measures of this kind and take necessary steps to repeal or invalidate them as soon as possible. The reason is crystal clear. Resorting to embargo as a tool to achieve political objectives undermines the collective efforts of Member States for achieving economic growth and sustainable development at national, regional and international levels.

I would also like to recall that the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation called upon States to refrain from any unilateral measure as contravening international law and the United Nations Charter, and as impeding the full achievement of economic and social development by the population of the affected countries, in particular women and children.

The Johannesburg Plan also indicates that such unilateral measures hinder the well-being of the affected people and create obstacles to the full enjoyment of their human rights, including the right of everyone to a standard of living adequate for their health and well-being, a right to food, medical care and necessary social services.

The Johannesburg Plan of Implementation also stipulates that States should cooperate to promote a supportive and open international economic system that would lead to economic growth and sustainable development in all countries. It adds that trade policy measures for environmental purposes should not constitute a means of arbitrary unjustifiable discrimination in international trade.

The 2005 World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1) reaffirmed the commitment of all countries to ensure that developing countries participate fully in the world trading system in order to meet the needs of their economic development. The Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement, held in September 2006 in Havana, Cuba, reiterated its position on this issue. The Summit called upon the Government of the United

States of America to put an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba, which, in addition to being unilateral and contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, international law and the principle of good-neighbourliness, is causing huge material losses and economic damage to the people of Cuba.

My delegation believes that resorting to unjustifiable economic coercive measures against other States on the basis of political criteria is not acceptable to the international community. The extraterritorial application of internal laws creates an antagonistic environment in international relations and adversely affects world peace and security. Such political acts with economic implications continue to restrict investment, trade, employment, technology transfer and the prospects for economic growth not only of the targeted countries but also of other countries.

We hope that those Member States which continue to apply unilateral coercive economic laws and measures will take the necessary steps to repeal or invalidate them at the earliest opportunity.

Mr. Hamidon (Malaysia): At the outset, my delegation would like to associate itself with the statement made earlier by the representative of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. We would also like to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report (A/61/132) on this subject.

Since the initiation of resolutions on this item 15 years ago, the international community has continuously demonstrated that it rejects the use of unilateral measures by one Member of this Organization to effect political change in another. The fact that last year 182 countries supported resolution 60/12, as compared to the 179 that supported resolution 59/11 in 2004, may be taken to be an indication of the unwavering, and indeed strengthening, position of the international community in this regard.

Laws, particularly extraterritorial legislation, such as the Torricelli and the Helms-Burton Acts, have been formulated by the United States with the sole purpose of hurting Cuba and its people, including the most vulnerable segments of the population. It is clear that, by limiting Cuba's access to markets, capital, technology and investment, these laws exert pressure on Cuba to change its political and economic orientation, which, the United States hopes, will in turn bring about regime change in Cuba.

It is also clear that these laws, by virtue of their extraterritorial and unilateral nature, clearly contravene universally accepted principles of international law, including the Charter of the United Nations. Furthermore, the embargo is also inconsistent with the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation Among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. Given the illegal nature of these laws and the embargo, Malaysia is fundamentally opposed to them.

This unilateral embargo clearly has had serious consequences for the Cuban people and their economy. It has been estimated that, for last year alone, direct economic damage caused by the unilateral embargo was to the tune of $4.2 billion. Cumulative damages to the Cuban economy have been estimated to be in the region of $86.1 billion. In addition, the unilateral embargo is a serious obstacle to the full enjoyment of the rights of the Cuban people to life, health, food and education, to name but a few.

But the damage is not confined to Cuba alone. The embargo is detrimental to the interests of other countries, such as Malaysia, which adheres to the principle of friendly relations among countries. Certainly, efforts to exploit fully the potential benefits arising from stronger and deeper bilateral relations between Malaysia and Cuba have been stymied by the imposition of this measure.

Ironically, the imposition of these laws is also detrimental to the way in which the international community at large views the United States. It gives the impression that the United States is willing to continuously act in contravention of international law and global public opinion against a country that poses no direct threat to it. It reduces the United States' moral clout on issues that are important to them and to many other countries, including Malaysia. These issues include free and fair trade, as well as the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

As a country that enjoys excellent bilateral relations with both the United States and Cuba, we would like to urge the former to look beyond the confines of vested interests, rethink its overall approach towards Cuba and evolve its policy from one

of isolating its smaller neighbour to one of dialogue and accommodation.

Malaysia once again reaffirms its strongest commitment to respect fully the principles of international law. For this reason, and for the practical reasons outlined earlier, Malaysia will continue to reaffirm its solidarity with the Cuban people by supporting and, once again, voting in favour of the draft resolution (A/61/L.10) on this subject.

Mr. Mbuende (Namibia): My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by the representative of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

My delegation has come here again for what has, over the past 15 years, become virtually an annual judicial pilgrimage to vote in favour of draft resolution A/61/L.10, entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba" — or rather to pass a verdict on the Torricelli and Helms-Burton Acts. These Acts have been sentenced to judicial death many times in the past. Why have they not been executed or scrapped from the law books? Experts are unanimous in their belief that those Acts not only contradict international law but also cannot stand the test of time in terms of the United States of America's own legal tradition.

There is a striking consensus among the developed and developing countries. Many countries went out of their way to enact laws that would militate against the impact of the Helms-Burton Act. In democratic societies, if a law is as unpopular as the ones that gave rise to the draft resolution that we are debating today, it is common practice to either repeal or amend it. The irony of those Acts is that they keep on coming back, with a vengeance, extending their provisions to new areas. But that does not make them acceptable.

Namibia will today vote in favour of this draft resolution — not only as an expression of solidarity with the people of Cuba but above all in defence of the sovereignty of so many nations on which the terms of the embargo encroaches.

Namibia is committed to the principle of freer trade and the movement of the factors of production internationally. The world order we are working towards is underpinned by the greater participation of all countries, in particular developing countries, in the global economy, by increasing their share of world trade and access to capital flows. We cannot associate ourselves with a law or initiative that goes against that trend.

Namibia believes in the autonomy of market forces to do business anywhere, on the basis of commercial viability. We do not believe in undue political interference in the market place. In fact, the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba represents unjustifiable interference, having raised the cost of doing business not only with Cuba, but also in third countries. This is a threat to a healthy business environment. How many countries did not have to incur costs to pass domestic legislation to prevent the application of the Helms-Burton Act?

Namibia is equally concerned with the impact of the embargo against Cuba on the plight of the poor. Any hardship imposed on a people, whether by natural calamities or politics, affects the poor and vulnerable groups in any society. That is certainly true of Cuba. However, the embargo is a blow not only to the poor in Cuba, but also in Africa and Latin America.

Let us put ourselves in the position in the poor in many African villages where the only doctor is from Cuba. I cannot help but go back some 30 years to the small town of Arusha, in Tanzania, where I needed dental attention and where the only dentist was from Cuba. Did anybody ask himself or herself what the impact would be of the withdrawal of Cuban doctors from many African countries? Cuba, notwithstanding its own challenges, has been and continues to be an important partner of many African countries in the struggle against poverty. The embargo has had much further-reaching implications than one would imagine.

It is important that the embargo be brought to an end, because it is politically unjustifiable, commercially costly and antidevelopment. It is against that background that my delegation urges the United States Government to heed the international call and to implement the General Assembly resolutions. It is in the interests of all of us, including the Governments of the United States and Cuba, that measures be taken to normalize relations between the two countries.

Mr. Mombo (United Republic of Tanzania): My delegation fully associates itself with the statement made by the representative of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Today marks the fifteenth year since this item was introduced into the General Assembly agenda for deliberation. The economic embargo imposed on the Government and people of Cuba is in its forty-eighth year — one of the longest in contemporary times.

As in the past, the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania takes the floor to join other Member States in calling for the lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo unilaterally imposed against Cuba. The country has endured the embargo valiantly but at a forbidding cost.

The embargo, as we all know, has been particularly damaging to the Cuban population, particularly the most vulnerable category: women, children and the elderly. It need not be so. The embargo needs to be terminated.

Like many other countries, we are concerned that the sanctions imposed under the Helms-Burton Act exceed the jurisdiction of national legislation and encroach on the sovereignty of other States that deal with Cuba. We therefore deem the Act to be incompatible with the principle of the sovereign equality of States. The embargo is a systematic collective punishment in violation of human rights and international law. It runs counter to all prevailing moral and ethical values, as innocent people suffer. The extraterritorial nature of the embargo continues to cause considerable damage to Cuba as well as to third countries, which are prevented from taking full advantage of the opportunities offered by the Cuban economy.

Tanzania reaffirms its continued support to and cooperation and solidarity with the people of Cuba and supports the draft resolution being submitted for adoption by this Assembly.

In view of the fact that the embargo has caused significant suffering to the people of Cuba, we call on the United States Government to end it and normalize relations with Cuba in the interests of all the people of Cuba and of the United States of America. That may prove to be the most constructive way of reconciling decades old differences and promote a positive spin-off for the region and the world.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the Permanent Representative of Australia to introduce the amendment to draft resolution A/61/L.10, contained in document A/61/L.19.

Mr. Hill (Australia): In every session since 1982, the Assembly has consistently adopted resolutions on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba. Australia, in common with the overwhelming majority of Member States, has supported those resolutions for many years. Australia believes that the trade embargo of Cuba is wrong and should be lifted immediately for the benefit of the people of Cuba and of the rules-based international trading system, which we strongly support.

Having said that, we recognize the reasons that motivated the embargo — concerns valid then and still valid today — about the lack of political freedom and a failure to meet internal human rights obligations by the Government of Cuba. In the past, we, as well as others, have made explanations of vote detailing our concerns about such human rights situations, but to no avail. Year after year, there have been those who have made such statements, but it has not led to change.

There is simply no point in repeating the same practice year after year. Therefore, this year we propose a different approach — that the General Assembly adopt an amended resolution that, on the one hand, calls for an end to the embargo but, on the other hand calls upon Cuba to improve its human rights performance. This can be done through the adoption of an amendment that we circulated yesterday and that is now being distributed as draft amendment A/61/L.19. It would insert a new operative paragraph after operative paragraph 3.

It reads:

> "Noting that such laws and measures were motivated by valid concerns about the continued lack of democracy and political freedom in Cuba, calls upon the Cuban Government to release unconditionally all political prisoners, cooperate fully with international human rights bodies and mechanisms, respect the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and comply fully with its obligations and all human rights treaties to which it is a State party."

The advantage is that the General Assembly has the opportunity for a win-win outcome, saying that we want to see an end to the embargo but also saying that the people of Cuba, who do not have the opportunity of free political expression, deserve better.

The price of speaking up and asking for nothing more than is reasonable is to be abused by the Cuban Minister with false allegations and offensive language. It is no wonder others are not prepared to take such actions, but it does underline the necessity for an amendment of this type.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I give the floor to the representative of Cuba, who wishes to speak on a point of order.

Mr. Malmierca Díaz (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): As the Foreign Minister of Cuba has already stated, we would like to put forward a no-action motion regarding the amendment contained in document A/61/L.19 under rule 74 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

The amendment to draft resolution A/61/L.10, drafted by the United States and submitted by Australia, is contrary to the letter and the spirit of the successive resolutions adopted by the General Assembly that have demanded the lifting of the unjust and illegal embargo against the people of Cuba. The draft amendment, far from facilitating compliance with the rightful demand by the international community that an end be put to such an extraterritorial policy, which clearly contravenes the norms and principles of international law, is but a pretext to continue and intensify the unilateral embargo by the United States against the people of Cuba.

If the Bush Administration and Governments subordinate to its imperialist policy against the Cuba nation had any genuine concern regarding human rights in our country, they should have addressed it in the Third Committee or the Human Rights Council. But they do not dare to hold a face-to-face debate on this subject. What is being attempted today is to legitimize a supposed right of the powerful to impose unilateral coercive measures that contravene international law, using any pretext available.

What is at stake today is the defence of the norms and principles of international law and the protection of multilateralism against the dominance of force and injustice.

Guided by our firm conviction that even to consider the amendment put forward by Australia at the urging of the United States would be to go against the very basis of international relations, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, Cuba reiterates that it has decided to put forward a no-action motion on the proposed amendment contained in document A/61/L.19, under rule 74 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

Cuba requests that the Assembly consider this no-action motion and requests all States to support it. Cuba further requests a recorded vote in this respect.

The Acting President: The representative of Cuba has moved, within the terms of rule 74 of the rules of procedure, that no action be taken on the amendment contained in document A/61/L.19.

Rule 74 reads as follows:

> "During the discussion of any matter, a representative may move the adjournment of the debate on the item under discussion. In addition to the proposer of the motion, two representatives may speak in favour of, and two against, the motion, after which the motion shall be immediately put to the vote."

Mr. Godard (United States of America): The annual General Assembly resolution condemning the United States bilateral embargo against Cuba inaccurately attributes the suffering of the Cuban people to the embargo. The resolution does not speak at all to the adverse impact on the Cuban people of the Cuban Government's own policies, which deny them basic human, labour, political and economic rights.

This year we believe it is especially important for the international community to speak up on behalf of the Cuban people and recognize that the best hope for improving the lives of the Cuban people is for the regime to pursue a transition to democracy and allow the Cuban people full enjoyment of their human, economic, labour and political rights.

We oppose this no-action motion in order to help preserve the General Assembly as a meaningful forum in which to address human rights issues. No-action motions, which encourage the United Nations to turn a blind eye to even the most egregious violators of human rights, undermine the effectiveness of this body. It is not in our collective interest for the General Assembly to be seen as the protector and apologist of regimes that abuse human rights.

We will vote against this motion and urge other delegations to do the same.

Mr. Maqungo (South Africa): The delegation of Cuba has put forward a no-action motion. Let me reiterate that, when South Africa spoke on behalf of the Group of 77, we stated that, at the thirtieth annual Group of 77 and China ministerial meeting, the G-77 ministers firmly rejected the imposition of laws and regulations with extraterritorial impact and all other forms of coercive economic measures, including unilateral sanctions against developing countries, and reiterated the urgent need to eliminate them immediately. They emphasized the fact that such actions not only undermine the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and international law, but also severely threaten freedom of trade and of investment. They therefore called on the international community to neither recognize those measures nor to apply them.

The amendment proposed by the delegation of Australia is not acceptable to the South African delegation, because it asks of us to abdicate our responsibility of defining our own democracy and what constitutes political freedom. The amendment notes that such laws and measures were motivated by valid concerns about the continued lack of democracy and political freedom in Cuba. Surely, if we are to abdicate our responsibility to define what constitutes democracy and what constitutes political freedom vested in one State and also to vest any State with the right to pass extraterritorial laws, that will certainly not be a win-win situation for the Assembly, but a lose-lose situation. For that reason, South Africa will vote in favour of a no action motion.

Mr. Liu Zhenmin (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The contents of Australia's amendment are not new to us. It distorts the purpose of draft resolution A/61/L.10. Since 1992 the General Assembly has been adopting consecutive resolutions urging countries concerned to end the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba. That fully reflects the preponderant view of the international community on the issue.

We believe the General Assembly should reject the amendment. Therefore, the Chinese delegation is in favour of Cuba's motion to take no action on the Australian amendment.

Mr. Hill (Australia): Not surprisingly, I am opposed to the motion of no action, and I respectfully suggest that there is a confusion between the merits of the amendment I have moved and the right to have it debated.

The representative of South Africa has just argued that each of us has the right to define our own democracy. That might be so, but each of us is also obliged to comply with the terms of the Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the major conventions to which we are party. The amendment I am seeking to have debated in effect calls upon Cuba to do just that.

I would suggest that a failure to appreciate the linkage between the embargo as it is now in place and Cuba's failure to meet its international obligations under the Human Rights Convention is a failure to accept reality. There is, in fact, a clear linkage. We are prepared to put the case forward for our amendment if we are given the opportunity. But to not be permitted that opportunity in this Hall of debate, I would respectfully argue, is not to be given the opportunity to look at the totality of the issue. The totality of the issue is clearly whether there is merit in the embargo. That calls into play the issue of Cuba's human rights record, and therefore a debate upon that would determine how nation States might be prepared to vote on the embargo.

We would argue that there is a linkage, that the issue of Cuba's human rights record is important and that it could be debated in the Third Committee, as was suggested by the representative of Cuba. We take that suggestion on board. But it is also possible to seek to amend other relevant motions to give the Assembly the opportunity to debate an issue of such importance. We are taking that opportunity today.

I remind the Assembly that all we are asking is that it call upon the Cuban Government to release unconditionally all political prisoners, to cooperate fully with international human rights bodies and mechanisms and to respect the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and to comply fully with its obligations under all human rights treaties to which it is a State party.

We are not calling upon Cuba to in any other way to meet an obligation for which it might have discretion. We are simply calling upon it to meet the obligations that we all accept, and on that basis to justify the removal of the embargo and to give all of us greater comfort in supporting the removal of the

embargo as addressed in the draft resolution before us today.

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus heard two delegations speaking in favour and two delegations speaking against the motion put forward by Cuba.

In accordance with the rules of procedure I shall now put to the vote the motion submitted by the representative of Cuba to take no action on the amendment thereto contained in document A/61/L.19. In submitting its motion, the representative of Cuba also requested that a recorded vote be taken.

The Assembly will now vote on the motion put forward by Cuba not to take action on the amendment contained in document A/61/L.19.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Palau, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

Kiribati, Liechtenstein, Samoa, Switzerland, Tonga

The motion for no action was adopted by 126 votes to 51, with 5 abstentions.

[Subsequently, the delegation of Benin informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

The Acting President: Since the motion for no action has been adopted, no action will be taken on the amendment contained in document A/61/L.19. We will therefore proceed to consider draft resolution A/61/L.10.

Before giving the floor to the speakers in explanation of vote before the vote, I would like to remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Ms. Lintonen (Finland): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Iceland, Moldova, Montenegro, Norway, Romania, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey and Ukraine align themselves with this explanation of vote.

Regarding the no-action motion, the European Union voted against, on the basis of the EU's long-

standing opposition to the use of no-action motions, which it considers contrary to the spirit of dialogue.

As for the substance of this issue, the European Union believes that the United States trade policy towards Cuba is fundamentally a bilateral issue. Nevertheless, the EU and its member States have clearly expressed their opposition to the extraterritorial extension of the United States embargo, such as that provided for in the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992 and the Helms-Burton Act of 1996.

The European Union cannot accept the fact that unilateral measures imposed by the United States on specific countries limit the Union's economic and commercial relations with third countries — in this case, Cuba. Therefore, in November 1996, the Council of Ministers of the European Union adopted a regulation and joint action to protect the interests of natural or legal persons resident in the EU against the extraterritorial effects of the Helms-Burton legislation, prohibiting compliance with that legislation.

Moreover, on 18 May 1998, at the European Union-United States Summit in London, a package was agreed upon that included waivers to Titles III and IV of the Helms-Burton Act, a commitment by the United States Administration to resist future extraterritorial legislation of that kind, and an Understanding with Respect to Disciplines for the Strengthening of Investment Protection. The EU continues to urge the United States to implement its side of the 18 May 1998 Understanding.

The European Union's policy towards Cuba is clear and was set out in a Common Position in 1996. The objective of the EU in its relations with Cuba is to encourage a pacific process of transition, led by the Cuban people, to pluralist democracy and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as to sustainable economic recovery and improvement in the living standards of the Cuban people. The European Union underlines that it is willing to cooperate with Cuba in those fields on the basis of a dialogue with the Cuban Government and Cuban civil society as soon as the Government shows the political will to engage in a dialogue aimed at tangible results, especially in the field of human rights. Member States most recently reaffirmed their commitment to that Common Position on 12 June 2006.

The European Union believes that critical engagement with the Cuban Government, alongside dialogue with wider Cuban civil society, is the most effective way to promote peaceful change in Cuba. However, the EU considers that full cooperation with Cuba will depend upon improvements in the areas of human rights and political freedom in that country. The EU remains deeply concerned about the human rights situation in Cuba.

The EU also remains deeply concerned about cases in which representatives of the peaceful opposition and of civil society have been intimidated and harassed in order to repress critical voices. In addition, family members of political prisoners have been victims of so-called acts of repudiation. There remain prisoners who have been neither charged nor tried, and people suspected of sympathizing with the banned political opposition have been detained and sentenced under the provisions of the Penal Code on "pre-delictive dangerousness". The EU urges the Cuban Government to unconditionally release all political prisoners and to refrain from carrying out acts against members of their families. We appeal to the Cuban authorities to cooperate fully with international human rights bodies and mechanisms — especially the Personal Representative of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Cuba.

The Cuban Government's achievements in health care and education are undermined by its restrictions on civil, political and economic rights. The domestic Cuban economic policy and the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States seriously hamper the economic development of Cuba, negatively affecting the standards of living of the Cuban people.

With regard to the United States of America, we express our rejection of all unilateral measures against Cuba that are contrary to commonly accepted rules of international trade, and reiterate our view that the lifting of the United States trade embargo would open Cuba's economy, to the benefit of the Cuban people. With regard to Cuba, the European Union urges the Cuban authorities to bring about real improvements in all the fields that I have mentioned.

For all of those reasons, and despite its serious criticism of Cuba's human rights record, the European Union will unanimously vote in favour of draft resolution A/61/L.10.

Mr. Maksimychev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation has consistently supported the position that it is inadmissible to carry out unilateral measures of an extraterritorial nature in international relations. We believe that in today's world, any attempt to isolate individual countries is counterproductive. Russia, like the absolute majority of United Nations Member States, decisively condemns the United States embargo against Cuba and favours a swift lifting of that embargo.

At every session of the General Assembly since 1994, Russia has supported resolutions entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba". We are convinced that ending the embargo and normalizing the relations between the United States and Cuba would generally help to improve the situation in Cuba and further integrate the country into global economic processes.

Guided by those considerations, and expressing solidarity with the will repeatedly expressed by the overwhelming majority of Member States, Russia believes it is essential to support the draft resolution requiring a lifting of the embargo and normalization of the relations between the United States and Cuba, which would serve the interests of the peoples of Cuba and the United States and have a positive effect on the overall situation in the region of Central America and the Caribbean and the world as a whole. Therefore, we will once again vote in favour of the draft resolution at the present session of the General Assembly.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote.

The Assembly will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/61/L.10. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kiribati, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Against:

Israel, Marshall Islands, Palau, United States of America

Abstaining:

Micronesia (Federated States of)

Draft resolution A/61/L.10 was adopted by 183 votes to 4, with 1 abstention (resolution 61/11).

The Acting President: I shall now give the floor to those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of vote on the resolution just adopted.

I would like to remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Tarrago (Brazil) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the countries members of MERCOSUR — Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay, Venezuela and Brazil — and the associated States Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru.

As has been our practice in previous years, the countries members of MERCOSUR and the associated States voted in favour of the resolution that has just been adopted. The General Assembly reaffirms the need to end the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba. The international community reaffirms its support for multilateralism and its rejection of unilateral coercive measures.

The message is clear. The embargo against Cuba is contrary to the principles of international law and the purposes and principles of the Charter, to which we are all committed. Nor is it in conformity with the multilateral rules of trade or the legal obligations of the members of the World Trade Organization.

The extraterritorial application of domestic laws does not contribute to the promotion of democratic values or to dialogue among sovereign States. On the contrary, it can lead to increased polarization and confrontation. The embargo has been rejected by the General Assembly, as well as by other international forums and bodies, including the Organization of American States, the Latin American Economic System, the Ibero-American Summit and the Rio Group.

The countries of MERCOSUR and the associated States joined in the rejection by the international community of the promulgation and implementation of such unilateral coercive and extraterritorial measures. Our countries have demonstrated once more their support for multilateralism as the only just and effective way of resolving disputes among States and promoting understanding, security, human rights and cooperation.

Mr. Abdalhaleem (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of South Africa, who spoke on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

For more than four decades, the Cuban people have been suffering as a result of the devastating effects of the embargo imposed unilaterally by the United States against their country. That is a flagrant violation of the principles of the Charter, which calls for anchoring the values of cooperation, equality, fraternity, justice and solidarity, as well as respect for peoples' freedom of choice. Consolidation of the principles of the rule of law, rejection of oppression and hegemony, respect for human rights, in particular the right to development, are all at the very heart of our Organization's mission, and all Member States should seek to strengthen them.

For the fifteenth consecutive year, the General Assembly has considered the item entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba". Today, 183 countries voted in favour of the draft resolution, which seeks to end the embargo, thus making absolutely clear how serious it is when a country arrogates to itself the right to impose unilateral sanctions. The embargo against Cuba is unjust and constitutes a violation of the fundamental principles of the Charter, as well as of the rules of international law and the principles that govern and organize economic, trade and financial relations among countries.

The continuation of the embargo runs counter to the reform effort that is now under way in the United Nations, and represents a denial of the unanimity of the Member States regarding the need to promote and to translate into reality the principles underlying that effort to replace confrontation with cooperation and respect for the right of peoples to choose their own political, economic and social systems.

Despite the fact that the international community has constantly reaffirmed the need to end the embargo, the Cuban people are continuing to suffer greatly. Indeed, their suffering increased last year as a result of the tightening of the embargo, which is now extraterritorial in nature. Restrictions against financial transactions of Cuban citizens and of their moneys have been further tightened in a draconian manner. Attempts are now being made to deter foreign investors, banks and corporations from establishing commercial and financial relations with Cuba. All of that is happening in blatant disregard of the will of the

international community and General Assembly resolutions.

Since 1997, my country too has been suffering because of unilateral economic sanctions as a result of such unjustifiable policies, as have other countries. In the Sudan, we know full well the seriousness of such measures and their terrible and cruel consequences. We very much understand the losses suffered by Cuba and the magnitude of suffering inflicted on the Cuban people because of the embargo. We would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm our solidarity with the friendly people and Government of Cuba. We reaffirm our rejection of those measures and call upon the Cuban people to continue to resist them, as well as to continue their remarkable achievements in all areas through the multilateral system, which we have all chosen as the framework for joint action.

The Sudan's position regarding these policies is based on firm principle. We are resolute in standing against any policies of embargo and against exclusion and hegemonic policies. We therefore voted in favour of draft resolution A/61/L.10, submitted by Cuba, entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba". We would like to thank the States that voted in favour of the draft resolution for having expressed their strong rejection of unilateral measures that violate the principles of the Charter and of international law.

Mr. Loayza Barea (Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): As we have done for more than 10 years, we in the General Assembly continue to discuss the need to bring to an end the financial and trade embargo against the fraternal people and Government of Cuba, but without success. As a result of this continuous action at the level of multilateral diplomacy, a series of resolutions have been adopted, urging all States to adhere to the principles of the United Nations Charter and the principles embodied in international legal instruments and to repeal all laws and other extraterritorial measures impacting on the sovereignty of other States and their legitimate interests, as well as the freedom of trade and navigation.

Unfortunately, we see that the decision taken by the international community has come up against a unilateral decision in favour of the embargo, which is contrary to democratic principles and fails to offer a positive response to the will of the majority here represented.

The embargo and the sanctions imposed by the United States on Cuba, which have been in place for over 40 years, have an impact, on the one hand, on the legitimate endeavours of the Cuban people to find their own course and their own mechanisms to achieve development and yet seek paradoxically, on the other hand, through such coercive measures of a unilateral nature, to promote democracy, freedom and human rights in Cuba.

We feel strongly that this attitude fails to meet either the principles or the sentiments of the majority of countries within the United Nations system. These actions are contrary to the principles of freedom and democracy and in addition impact the human rights of the people of Cuba. The way in which these principles are being used demonstrates a distortion of their goals and purpose.

Bolivia constantly seeks, from a sovereign and dignified position, to maintain relations of friendship and cooperation with the United States. We urge the United States Government to review and end this policy, which has met the condemnation and opposition of the international community and gives rise to constant concern in Latin America as a result of the negative impacts on Cuba, on its people and on the region.

We firmly believe that the international community has made clear its concern regarding the embargo in that it is contrary to the principles of the United Nations Charter and because of the negative impact on the Cuban people, depriving them of their right to goods and to free movement and of access to medicines and components for manufacturing medicines among other things. We identify with the will of the international community in this demand that an immediate end be brought to the embargo against Cuba. We are of the view that the mechanisms of a fair international system based on international law and on treaties allow for a coexistence that accommodates contradictions and differences but rejects hostile confrontations.

The differences in systems and views of States should be resolved through cooperation and dialogue on a basis of equality and mutual respect. Moreover, Bolivia has had personal experience with the significant difficulties that developing countries daily

face in implementing policies intended to achieve and promote the welfare of our populations. Therefore, we understand and express our solidarity with the people of Cuba and its Government, which are suffering as the result of a policy that hampers the development to which all nations are entitled.

We urge the United States Government to replace confrontation with dialogue, sanctions with communication and effectively implement the relevant resolutions of the United Nations in this regard. Bolivia firmly opposes these sanctions and the economic and financial embargo. We support the Cubans in seeking to protect their national independence and their sovereignty and we echo the words of Brazil on behalf of the Rio Group. For those reasons, we have voted for the draft resolution.

Mr. Swe (Myanmar): The international community has consistently expressed its unequivocal support for the call to end the economic, commercial and financial embargo by the United States against Cuba, since the General Assembly adopted resolution 47/19 by a clear majority 15 years ago. The Summit Conference of the Heads of State or Government of the Non-Aligned Movement held in Havana last September also reiterated its call to the Government of the United States of America to put an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba.

Myanmar strongly believes that the promulgation and application by Member States of laws and regulations, the extraterritorial effects of which effect the sovereignty of other States and the legitimate interests of entities and persons under their jurisdiction, as well as the freedom of trade and the freedom of navigation, violate both the spirit and letter of the United Nations Charter and the universally accepted principles of international law. Accordingly, Myanmar opposes all forms of unilateral, economic and financial coercive measures, as well as sanctions and embargos that are contrary to international law. Myanmar, as one of the initiators of the five principles of peaceful coexistence, scrupulously respects the principle of sovereign equality of all States, non-intervention and non-interference in the internal affairs of countries.

The economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States on Cuba has not only negatively impacted the economy of the country, but also adversely affected the well-being of the people. The embargo is aimed at destroying the political, economic and social system of the Cuban people. The blockage imposed on the health centre in particular is causing undue suffering and hardship to the Cuban people, particularly the most vulnerable segment among the population — women and children. We regard this as inhumane and strongly oppose such measures.

These measures can in no way promote peace and stability in the region. These measures are against international law. Myanmar wholeheartedly associates itself with the call by the international community on the United States to bring an end to the embargo and sanctions on Cuba. My delegation, therefore, voted in favour of the draft resolution to reaffirm our opposition to laws and regulations that have extraterritorial effect and to demonstrate our friendship with the Government and people of Cuba.

Mr. Chidyausiku (Zimbabwe): The fact that the General Assembly continues to debate and pass resolutions year after year on the same issue, calling for similar action, without being heeded, is ample testimony to the shortcomings of the dispute settlement mechanisms of the United Nations system. The resolution on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial blockade on Cuba has enjoyed overwhelming support over the years. It is now time for the United States Government to take bold and positive steps to open up to the people of Cuba, restore the confidence of millions of people around the world in the United Nations system and rekindle that hope that was sparked by the adoption of the Charter of the United Nations many decades ago.

My country, Zimbabwe, understands only too well the negative impact of such ill-conceived, illegitimate and immoral measures on the lives of ordinary people, as it is also a victim of such illegal measures.

The majority of States Members of the United Nations, including Zimbabwe, have consistently rejected the adoption of national laws and regulations with extraterritorial impact, and all other coercive economic measures, including unilateral sanctions, which are targeted mainly against developing countries that seek to reassert their sovereignty.

The destiny of Cuba lies with the Cuban people, whose right it is to choose an economic and social system of their own choice that best suits their

circumstances. Is it not ironic that the leading advocates of free trade have become, at the same time, champions of blockades in a vile game of double standards? The persistence of the United States Government in that practice, which harms the livelihoods of innocent people, also undermines all development efforts aimed at achieving the Millennium Development Goals and all other internationally agreed development goals.

Not only is the embargo imposed by the United States Government on Cuba a violation of international law and the principles of the United Nations Charter; it also runs contrary to the letter and spirit of the principles of the World Trade Organization (WTO) aimed at achieving freer trade. The United States and Cuba are both members of the WTO.

The Secretary-General's report makes it clear that the United States embargo on Cuba has denied that country access to markets, development credit granted by international financial institutions, and technology, and that it has further restricted freedom of navigation, trade and remittances to beneficiaries in that country.

My delegation therefore voted, in solidarity with the Government and people of Cuba, in favour of the resolution.

Mr. Dapkiunas (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): For the fifteenth year in a row, the General Assembly has called almost unanimously for an immediate end to the embargo on Cuba. Each year, we have seen an increase in the number of countries in favour of that goal. The international community has long understood that economic wars, like any other action undertaken on a false pretext, do not yield positive results. They lead only to destruction.

It is difficult to understand the reasons behind the flouting of the international community's appeal to end the embargo on Cuba. It is impossible to justify attempts to further tighten economic sanctions, as occurred this year.

At the summit of the Non-Aligned Movement held in Havana, Movement heads of State and Government agreed that only a sober and realistic vision of the contemporary world will allow calm and stability to be established. We call on those who continue to favour sanctions and the isolation of Cuba to be realistic. The Cubans should be allowed to live and work in peace. The sooner the need is recognized to focus on real, rather than spurious international problems, the sooner order will reign in the world and people will come to believe in the future.

Belarus is proud once again to take this opportunity to add its voice to the demands to end the embargo on the Cuban people. We are happy to stand with Cuba, our friend and tried and true partner.

Mr. Maema (Lesotho): My delegation fully associates itself with the statement made by the representative of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Lesotho rejects the unilateral imposition of all forms of economic, commercial and financial embargoes, as well as the unilateral application of other coercive measures by one State against another. Indeed, my delegation regards all coercive measures — be they economic, political or other — by one State against another as dangerous and thus inadmissible. In our view, such measures can never enhance international peace and stability, but must compromise them.

My delegation therefore insists on respect by all of the rule of law and on strict compliance with international law, particularly the noble principles of the sovereign equality of States and of non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

My delegation is therefore disheartened that, despite its adverse effects on the Cuban people over the years, and despite the fact that it has been condemned by an overwhelming majority of this Assembly since 1991, the embargo on Cuba has to date not been lifted. Ironically, the adoption over the years of further coercive measures that seek to isolate Cuba from international trade and further hurt the Cuban people have constantly been accompanied by claims that the blockade has been and is aimed at enhancing democracy, freedom and human rights in Cuba. Indeed, we have heard similar claims today.

My delegation wishes to reiterate its well-known position that it is the sovereign right of the people of any country, including Cuba, to determine the system of Government and the model of development most appropriate for their country. We also reiterate our strong conviction that, in order to exercise those rights, millions of people in Cuba need not have endured, for over four decades, the untold hardship, suffering and

misery caused by the blockade, as they have and still do.

The support that has just been expressed by the Member States that intervened on this agenda item and by the overwhelming majority that voted in favour of the resolution today truly reflects the fact that the unilateral embargo and measures aimed at tightening the blockade of Cuba are contrary to the principles of international law, particularly those enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

The Government of the Kingdom of Lesotho therefore strongly opposes the unilateral economic, commercial and financial embargo on Cuba and urges its lifting. For that reason, my delegation voted in favour of resolution 61/11.

Mr. Aburawi (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation voted in favour of resolution 61/11 because we believe that the imposition of sanctions and embargoes is not and never can be the right way to resolve disputes among States. The United Nations Charter provides proper avenues to resolve bilateral differences, including by negotiation, investigation, mediation, reconciliation, adjudication or resort to regional agencies and organizations. All such action should be conducted on the basis of full equality, mutual respect and non-interference in the internal affairs of countries.

That approach has been repeatedly stressed by States Members of the United Nations through the resolutions of the General Assembly, which must be complied with without delay, as they embody justice and common sense and consecrate the norms of international law. Such resolutions also send the clear message that no progress can be made towards establishing general peace, developing friendly relations among States and achieving higher levels of development without international cooperation anchored in mutual respect for the sovereignty of States regardless of their size or population, or the nature of their political and economic system.

The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya once again reaffirms its strong opposition to unilateral measures that are enforced against States for political reasons. We would like to express our deep concern over the maintenance by some States of unilateral coercive economic extraterritorial measures because they are in explicit contravention of norms of international law, especially the two principles of equal sovereignty among States and non-interference in their internal affairs.

The application of such measures would only deepen human suffering and further exacerbate differences and hatred among peoples of interrelated interests, which necessitates compliance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Proper and civilized solutions to problems should be found, solutions that would ensure that basic human rights such as the right to development, food, medical care and essential social services would not be interrupted.

The people of Cuba have been suffering from an unfair embargo for over four decades, an embargo that has caused severe, untold damage and that has affected the entire Cuban population, including children, women and the elderly. The embargo has also hamstrung the ability of the Cuban administration to import necessary foodstuffs, agricultural supplies, medical equipment and drugs needed for health care.

We hope that the resolution just adopted will contribute to the elimination of the suffering and hardship endured by the Cuban people through a favourable response from the country concerned to its provisions. We call on the United States to resolve its differences with Cuba by peaceful means and to set aside unilateral coercive measures that violate the Charter and human rights and attempt to hinder development efforts, which constitute a noble objective of the United Nations system.

Mr. Kapoma (Zambia): Zambia reiterates its support for the call to lift the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba. My delegation is disappointed to note that the embargo has lasted for more than four decades, and it is our earnest desire that it be lifted without further delay.

The Resident Coordinator findings clearly demonstrate that the embargo has negative implications for Cuba's balance of trade, foreign exchange earnings and volume of production. Additionally, the embargo has had a negative impact on Cuba's commercial activities in the areas of food, agriculture, health, education, science and technology. This state of affairs has been demonstrated in the various accounts outlined in the report of the Secretary-General.

Mr. Al-Murad (Kuwait), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The Zambian Government continues to express concern at the persistent imposition of restrictions by the United States of America against the people of Cuba. A violation of this nature must be discouraged to the greatest extent possible. Therefore, my delegation appeals to all States Members of the United Nations to support the immediate lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba.

For 15 consecutive years, the General Assembly has adopted resolutions under the agenda item entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba". Last year, the resolution was adopted by 182 votes in favour and only 4 against. The support of the resolution shows the overwhelming rejection by the international community of the embargo, which should therefore be lifted.

We acknowledge the resilience of the Cuban people in the face of the difficulties arising from the sanctions. The embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba demonstrates by all accounts a failed policy and should therefore be abandoned.

Let me conclude by stating that the measures taken under the Helms-Burton Act continue to violate Cuba's rights to free trade and navigation. Based on the information provided by the United Nations system on the embargo's negative impact on the United Nations Development Programmes in Cuba, my delegation voted, as it has done in the past, in favour of the resolution. We will continue to do so for as long as the embargo continues.

Mr. Kittikhoun (Lao People's Democratic Republic) (*spoke in French*): More than four decades have gone by and the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on Cuba by the United States of America is still with us. This has been a long, painful and tough period for the innocent Cuban people. The embargo has benefited neither side; quite the contrary, it has created additional tension between two neighbouring countries.

In today's world, with its multifaceted cooperation among States, it is disappointing that there are still unilateral, discriminatory commercial practices. In our view, the extraterritorial application of the domestic laws of one country clearly violates the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. In keeping with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, no Member shall promulgate or apply laws, regulations or measures whose extraterritorial effects undermine the sovereignty of other Member States as well as freedom of trade. Each nation has the sovereign right to participate freely in the international commercial and financial system. In the light of the universal principal of sovereignty, no country has the right to interfere in the internal affairs of another country, despite the existence of different social and political systems.

As a sovereign, independent nation, the Republic of Cuba has the right to choose its own political system as well as its own development model. In order to reduce poverty and attain sustainable development, Cuba should be free to maintain and promote economic and commercial relations with all countries of our planet.

The Lao People's Democratic Republic, together with the majority of United Nations Member States, will continue to work to end the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba. This decidedly obsolete policy runs counter to international law and it has already caused so much suffering to the Cuban people. The Republic of Cuba is a member of the United Nations and as Members ourselves we must do everything to help that country fully to recover its legitimate right to integration in the globalized world economy.

Accordingly, my Government voted in favour of the draft resolution A/61/L.10.

Mr. Abdelaziz (Egypt): The delegation of Egypt voted in favour of the motion not to take action on the amendment proposed by Australia in document A/61/L.19 because Egypt believes firmly that the human rights situation in Member States of the United Nations should be addressed without selectivity, double standards or politicization, and with full respect for the competence of the Human Rights Council and the Third Committee, using cooperative and non-confrontational methods as clearly stipulated in the 2005 outcome document and Assembly resolution 60/251, establishing the Human Rights Council.

For us, the proposed amendment falls outside the institutional framework of our consideration of the item before us today. It would have been better for the sponsor of the amendment and his supporters to submit separate draft resolutions to the General Assembly and to the Security Council on the consistent and systematic violations that are committed on a daily

basis against the human rights of the Palestinian people. At this very moment, the Palestinian people are under fierce attacks from Israeli military forces, resulting in a massacre this morning, with 18 persons killed and 50 persons injured today alone in Beit Hanoun, raising the number of casualties in the latest military operation by Israel to more than 100 persons killed and hundreds of others wounded over a period of five days. This is an issue that requires priority in our consideration of how to effectively address human rights violations and human rights violators if we are truly serious in our commitment to avoid selectivity, double standards and politicization.

Finally, our vote in favour of the resolution contained in document A/61/L.10 is in full implementation of the provisions of the Final Document of September's Summit Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Havana, which stipulates, in its paragraph 234.6:

> "The Heads of State or Government re-emphasized that the exploitation of human rights for political purposes, including selective targeting of individual countries for extraneous considerations, which is contrary to the founding principles of the Movement and the United Nations Charter, should be prohibited. They urged that, in the discussion on human rights, adequate attention be given to the issues of poverty, underdevelopment, marginalization, instability and foreign occupation that engender social and economic exclusion and violation of human dignity and human rights, which cannot be divorced from any meaningful discussion relating to human rights".

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote.

I now call on the representative of Cuba, who wishes to speak in exercise of the right of reply. May I remind delegations that, in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mrs. Núñez Mordoche (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): The demented intensification of the genocidal policy of hostility, aggression and embargo carried out by the United States against the Cuban people reflects the frustration of the current Government of the United States and its inability to reverse the firm decision of Cubans to defend their independence and sovereignty to the last breath.

Those who claim the supposed right to unleash wars of conquest, massively bombard defenceless civilian populations in the name of freedom and the non-proliferation of weapons and institutionalize torture in the name of democracy have no moral authority to judge the Cuban revolution, which is a symbol of resistance and dignity for the peoples of the world. Nothing demonstrates the anti-Cuban nature of the policies and actions of the current United States Administration as clearly as the successive versions of the annexation plan prepared by the so-called Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba, established by President Bush.

Putting an end to the freedom and independence enjoyed today by Cuban men and women and destroying the society that they have freely chosen have become obsessions of the centres of power of the United States. Attempting to justify the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba on the basis of a false concern about a non-existent situation of human rights violations is unsustainable and fallacious. Those who have been responsible for practices of torture and the most brutal harassment of persons detained at Guantánamo and Abu Ghraib cannot give lessons on human rights. The United States does not qualify as a judge and does not have the moral authority to evaluate any country.

We will not dwell on the matter of Australia. Cuba's Minister for Foreign Affairs was clear, and I will merely repeat what he said. Australia's submission of an amendment at the behest of the United States is a demonstration of its abject submission to and complicity with the Government of the United States. A Government such as that of Australia, which nearly exterminated its aboriginal peoples and which today subjects them to apartheid, does not have the moral authority to condemn Cuba.

Permit me to address the European Union and its members. What stood out in the Union's explanation of vote : :garding the draft resolution against the embargo was hypocrisy and subordination to the anti-Cuban policy of its major ally.

The European Union does not have the moral authority to refer to the human rights situation in Cuba.

In its countries, there is growing racism and xenophobia and an upsurge in reprisals and discrimination against those who emigrate to Europe to escape poverty caused by centuries of colonial exploitation and an unjust international order that enables the Union to reap profits from sweat and from pillaging the resources of the South. What credibility should we give to the human rights concerns of Governments that have not had the courage to condemn the human rights violations carried out by the United States in its arbitrary detention and torture centre at Guantánamo, or of Governments that provided their territory for secret CIA flights carried out for the purpose of torturing prisoners?

The Cuban revolution, having resisted half a century of brutal aggression, embargo and hostility from the most powerful super-Power that has ever existed, moves inexorably forward. It is a genuinely popular and indigenous revolution that has enabled us to build a participative democracy and an ever more human and just society that places the human person at the centre of its activities. That is why we will continue to fight and are prepared to give up our own lives, if necessary.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 18?

It was so decided.

Programme of work

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to inform members that the General Assembly, in the morning of Friday 10 November, will consider agenda item 68, "Report of the Human Rights Council".

The meeting rose at 1.30 p.m.